

Friends Meeting House
Seaville, Cape May County, New Jersey

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

Addendum to
Friends' Meetinghouse
west side of Shore Road (U.S. Route 9)
1.2 miles south of State Route 50
Seaville vicinity
Cape May County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-74

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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Friends Meeting House
Seaville, Cape May County, New Jersey

Owner: Society of Friends

Date of Erection: 1716 or 1727

Architect:

Builder: Jacob Garretson

Present Condition: Good; restored in 1891-1892

Number of Stories: One

Materials of Construction: Foundation - brick

Exterior walls - frame
construction

Interior walls - wood,
frame showing

Roof - pitch, wood
shingles

Historical Data:

Local tradition indicates that the church was built in 1716. From a letter written in 1895 by the aunt of Miss Eliza L. Smith, we gather that in or about 1692 John Townsend, John and Peter Corson, Christopher Leaming, and Isaac Banner founded the Society of Friends in Cape May County. The letter further states that services were held in the house of John Townsend about 1700. We also learn that in 1716, Richard Townsend, Peter Corson, and Aaron Leaming of

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Cape May, and Messrs. Scull and Somers of Great Egg Harbor moved a small house, already erected at Beesleys Point, to the present site. They added to this building. From that time until 1860 regular services were held.

Through the efforts of George M. Ward of Salem, the meeting house was restored. The old part was torn down and the new one (1716 part) was repaired. About 1891-2 it was weather-boarded and painted. Circular meetings are now held here once a year.

According to George De Cou, 1727 is the correct date for the Seaville Meeting House, not 1716. Great Egg Harbor and Cape May Monthly meeting was established in 1726 and met alternately at Richard Somers at Great Egg Harbor and Rebecca Garretson on the Cape May side. To support this the following selection from the monthly meeting minutes of a meeting held at "Rebecca Garretsons this 29th day of ye 3rd mo 1727" is quoted: "It is concluded to build a meeting house by Jacob Garretsons and Jacob Garretson agrees to give one acre of land for the Servis of said meeting which house is to be built this fall." This refers to the present meeting house; there are no records of a Seaville Meeting.

Bibliography:

Material obtained from Miss Eliza S.
Smith by Alberta H. Moss

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Material from George De Cou,
Quaker Historian and Burlington
County Historical Society
Historian

Walter E. Pratt
Supervising Historian

Approved:
Seymour Williams
SEYMOUR WILLIAMS, A.I.A.
District Officer

Rec. Jan. 23 '37 T.H.W.